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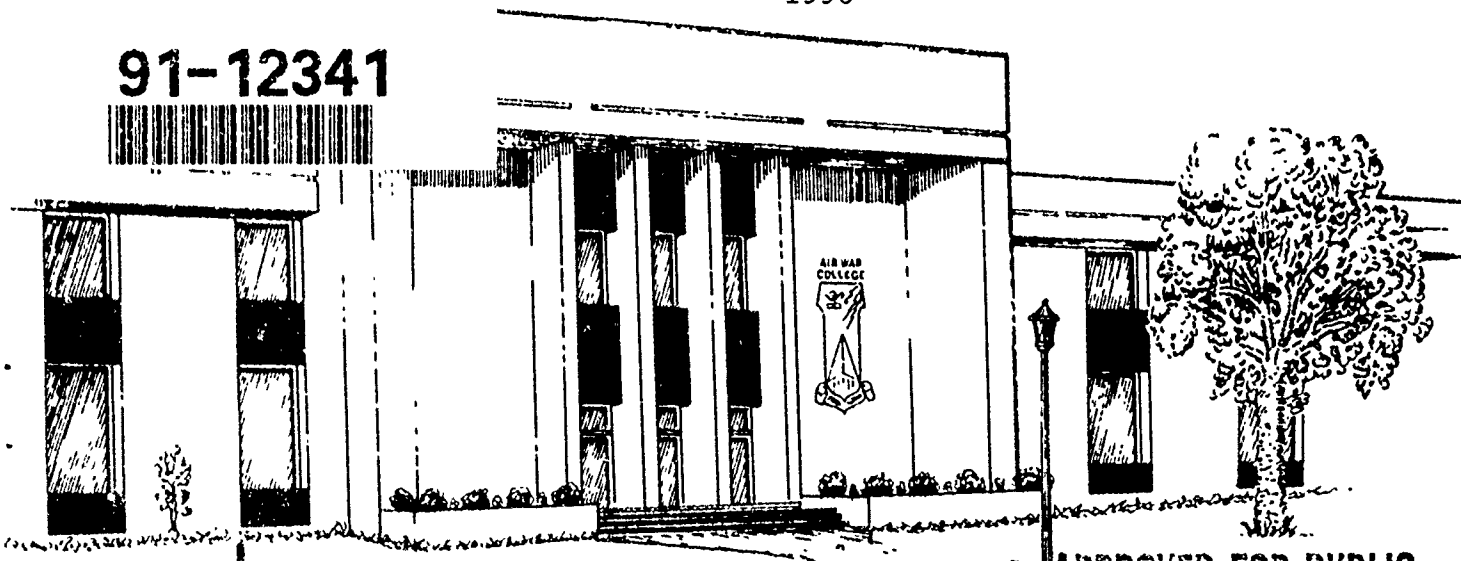
THE ARMY'S ORGANIZATIONAL INSPECTION PROGRAM

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UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
MAXWELL AIR FORCE BASE, ALABAMA

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THE ARMY'S ORGANIZATIONAL INSPECTION PROGRAM

by

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A DEFENSE ANALYTICAL STUDY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY

IN

FULFILLMENT OF THE CURRICULUM REQUIREMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TITLE: The Army's Organizational Inspection Program

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The Army instituted and reorganized the inspection program down to unit level in the early 1980's. Commanders have not fully implemented the systemic system due to : (1) lack of knowledge on how to organize and inspection; and (2) past experiences with the compliance type inspections. Those commanders who have implemented the program have found it to be an effective method to determine readiness and capabilities of their subordinate units. The final results of a well organized and structured program are better soldiers, better units and a more professionally trained Army.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Lieutenant Colonel William R. Sinclair (M.P.A., Troy State University) served a tour of duty in the Inspections Division, Office Of The Inspector General, Department of the Army. He has commanded Armor and Cavalry units from platoon level through battalion in CONUS, Republic of Vietnam and United States Army Europe. Most recently, he commanded the 2d Battalion 81st Armor in the Federal Republic of Germany where the battalion was awarded the Bruce C. Clark Award for the best overall combat unit in the 1st Armored Division. He is a graduate of the Armed Forces Staff College and holds the Soldiers Medal and the Bronze Star. Lieutenant Colonel Sinclair is a graduate of the Air War College, class of 1990.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The institution of the Army's Organizational Inspection Program (AR 1-201) gives commanders at battalion level command and above an effective instrument to assess and evaluate the readiness of their subordinate units. Dwindling material and fiscal resources and limited training time challenges commanders to effectively plan and execute a viable Command Inspection Program for subordinate units as required by regulatory guidance. Deriving maximum benefit from this program is dependent upon the commanders ability to focus the objectives of the inspection on the unit's ability to perform their assigned mission. With the resources available, how does a commander derive the maximum benefit from the Army Inspection Program, especially the Command and Staff Inspection Programs?

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Inspections have been an integral part of the military structures throughout the world since the creation of armies and organizations. Throughout history inspections have been used with a varying degree of success to determine the readiness of units and individuals, the ability of organizations to perform certain tasks and to determine if an organization is compiling with directives from higher headquarters.

The Army's First Inspection

Inspections came into being in the US Army in 1777. General Washington and the Continental Army were defeated several times by the British in the defense of Philadelphia. General Washington had attempted to combine 13 separate colonial military forces into one army. The results of deploying and trying to fight with an untrained and undisciplined army was humiliating and disastrous to General Washington and the Continental Congress. The Continental Army was deficient in military basics: training, discipline, supply, maneuver and organization. They had no common bond, they fought as 13 separate armies without any standardization. In desperation, General Washington requested Congressional

authorization to establish the position of "Inspectorship" in the Continental Army to be filled by a professionally competent officer skilled in training, organization and discipline(6:190). With the authorization from Congress came the establishment of the Inspector General.

Growth of the Inspection System

For nearly two centuries Inspector Generals were used in various roles. Primarily, they inspected units to determine the unit's abilities to perform their missions and were the eyes and ears for the commander in determining the state of morale, welfare and discipline within the Army. During their inspections, the subordinate commanders were observers, not participants in the system. Consequently, the orientation and focus of the inspection did not assist the commanders in determining the readiness of subordinate units and the unit's ability to perform their assigned missions. Instead, they were evaluated against other like units, against zero defects standards and against a broad and wide ranging generic mission statement extracted from the Table of Organization and Equipment.

There was a lack of coordination in planning, scheduling and conducting inspections. In most cases, the scheduled training, real world missions and unique

problems of the unit were disregarded and did not influence the schedule or the outcome of the inspections. The end result was that valuable training and maintenance time was lost preparing for spit and polish inspections that were conducted by inspectors who knew the book answer to every problem and question. Many soldiers became professional inspectors, but had no idea what was actually happening at the unit level. Consequently, the inspectors lacked creditability as an evaluator and as a soldier.

These type inspections were viewed as career determining events for a commander. In preparation for the compliance type inspection, units would stand down for several weeks, and in some cases, months, to prepare. Inspections came from numerous sources and covered a myriad of areas. Besides the Annual General Inspection, there was Command Maintenance Inspections, Maintenance Assistance Inspections, Logistical Evaluation Team Inspections, Operational Readiness Tests and Ammunition Surveillance Inspections just to mention a few. Each inspection team consisted of several seasoned non-commissioned officers, warrant officers and commissioned officers who knew their particular area of expertise in detail. They focused their inspections on compliance oriented checklists with definitive criteria which resulted in only "Yes" or "No" answers.

The results of numerous and checklist driven compliance inspections was constant preparation for some type of an evaluation. Many units entered into inspection sieges, always preparing for what they thought would be their next inspection. Some units did extremely well on some inspections because every piece of equipment was shined to a high gloss, every "i" was dotted and every "t" was crossed. However, many units who could pass the spit and polish inspections were unable to perform their combat mission. They had not trained; they were inspection ready, not combat ready.

CHAPTER III

EVOLUTION OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL INSPECTION PROGRAM

Inspections are necessary to determine the state of discipline, morale and readiness of the Army and its organizations. However, frequent and uncoordinated inspections become disruptive to scheduled training and maintenance. Inspections can be an effective tool for a commander to determine the overall status of a unit to perform its primary mission. Webster's New Riverside Dictionary defines inspection as: "To examine carefully for flaws and to critically review." Certain areas have to be looked at carefully to determine if flaws do exist. This is especially critical in sensitive areas such as nuclear surety, funds and resource accountability, and operational security. There are also areas that fall into the critically review category. These are the areas that have to be looked at with an open mind in a subjective manner.

Development of the Program

In the late 1970s, the Army's leadership realized that problems existed in the inspection program. The senior Army leadership set out to solve the problem in the early 1980's. After many studies, analysis and re-

search, the solution was the Army's Organizational Inspection Program. The program instituted a triad in the inspection process. It consisted of the Inspector General Inspections, the staff assistance inspections and the Commander's Inspection Program. It gave field commanders the latitude to determine the focus and define the criteria for inspection in their organizations. They were also charged with the responsibility to build their own program that would fit into the overall inspection program.

CHAPTER IV

RESPONSIBILITIES

Department of the Army Inspector General

The Army Inspector General is the Army proponent for inspection policies and must review and approve all Army level guidance that mandates any type inspection. They focus their inspections on the root cause of problems, not units during their special, follow up and general inspections. They pursue systemic problems which are beyond the ability and authority of a subordinate commander to fix. In general, the Inspector General has become an assistance provider to the commanders when the system fails to work. This has proven to be effective. Through the Inspector General Network (IGNET), a field Inspector General can request by electronic mail from the Department of the Army assistance in resolving problems that are not solvable in the field. Past experience has shown that an answer is generally back to the field within 48 hours.

Field Inspector Generals

Each general officer command has an Inspector General Special Staff section who perform Inspector General duties for the Commanding General. They conduct systemic inspection at the direction on their commander and provide investigation capabilities and assistance for subordinate units. In recent years, the field Inspector Generals have become a source of current information and assist subordinate commanders in solving systemic problems beyond the commanders ability to fix. The system has been extremely effective. Field Inspector Generals are no longer perceived as the enforcers and inspectors of merely policy and regulations; they evaluate mission readiness.

Staff Officers

The second part of the program is the staff assistance inspections. These inspections are limited in scope to the one or two functional areas which a particular staff section has proponency. The inspections are coordinated and scheduled and usually consist of staff assistance and the solving of unit unique problems. At brigade level and below, it has been effective to combine the staff inspection with the Commander's Inspection Program (CIP) due to time and resource constraints.

Field Commanders

The center of gravity in the Army's Organizational Inspection Program is the third part of the inspection triad, the Command Inspection Program. Army Regulation 1-201, The Army Inspection Program states that:

"Commanders above company level will:

- 1). Establish inspection policy for subordinate level commands.
- 2). Establish organizational inspection programs to ensure that command, staff, and IG inspections complement each other to minimize disruption of training and maintenance...
- 3). Review all inspection policies and programs each year to ensure that frequency, scope and duration of inspections remain appropriate and specific requirements remain valid."

The Army's Organizational Inspection Program has, in the eyes of many, put another command responsibility back where it belongs; in command channels. If the commander is responsible for the combat readiness of those organizations under his command, he must have a validated method of determining the overall readiness

and capabilities of his subordinate units. This is critical when assigning subordinate unit missions requiring certain capabilities. Under-estimating or over estimating the capabilities of a unit's effectiveness serves no useful purpose to the commander. An effective method of determining a unit's readiness or confirming or denying a unit's capabilities is through a well planned and validated Command Inspection Program.

CHAPTER V

IMPLEMENTATION

Battalion and brigade commanders have failed to take full advantage of the program. For several reasons, the CIP has been received and implemented with mixed reviews. To some commanders, the program reinforced their existing programs and only minor modifications had to be made to meet regulatory guidance(14:--). To others, it became another requirement to work into an already overloaded schedule of events so the CIP received very low, if any priority.

The VII (US) Corps Inspector General looked closely at the implementation of the CIP within the Corps. The primary problem with the implementation was that commanders did not understand the program, did not know how to organize an inspection to obtain the battle focus they needed and were unable to manage an inspection with the resources that were available. The stigma and past experiences of the rigid compliance inspections had also soured many officers. Consequently, some units did not implement the program(16:--).

In units that had a well structured and effective program, the commander knew the capabilities, strong points and shortfalls of his subordinate units. Shortfalls were being fixed and the units were becoming more proficient in their missions.

An Effective Program

Many programs throughout the Army have proven effective. However, there is one program that shows the benefits of a sound, well structured and innovative CIP and the effects it can have on the unit, the soldiers and the future of the Army.

In 1977, prior to the institution of the Army's Organizational Inspection Program, the Commander, 9th Infantry Division Support Command instituted an unannounced Command Inspection Program(4:--). His objective was to gain positive control of the command, to upgrade the soldier's standards of appearance, their living areas, and the readiness and mission support provided the division. When he assumed command of the 9th DISCOM, moral, discipline and readiness was the lowest of any organization on Ft Lewis, Washington. He set the standards for the command in his Command Philosophy and started the Command Inspection Program. He personally participated in every inspection. They were unan-

nounced. Every Tuesday and Thursday a company was selected for inspection. At 0500 hours they were notified and alert procedures were initiated.

The inspection team, composed of the DISCOM staff and functional area experts, was on-hand to observe all procedures. The inspection was a complete look at all functional areas from individual training, collective training, unit readiness and support functions provided to the brigades which they supported.

After only three months, a marked improvement was noticed in the overall status of subordinate units. Some progressed faster than others. However, reports of indiscipline dropped, maintenance backlogs began to disappear, soldier's individual appearance and living areas improved dramatically. Within 6 months, DISCOM units were passing the post Annual General Inspection and the Maintenance Evaluation Team Inspection. Prior to that time, not a single DISCOM unit had passed either inspection(4:--).

The impact of this program has had long range effects in the Army. As of 1987, of the 51 officers who were either company commanders or battalion staff officers, 38 have been selected to command battalions in the Army(4:--). Compared to the Army-wide average selec-

tion rate for battalion command of less than 10%, the selection rate of nearly 75% from that group of officers is phenomenal. Most of the officers selected to command have used the same or a similar program in their commands with positive results.

This is a case of a good program, initially resisted, that turned into a result-producing training event. The end product was that many officers and NCOs learned that a well planned and executed program can pay dividends: in the short term to the unit and the long term to the army.

Other Programs

Inspections and the associated problems are not unique to the US Army, its sister services, or to our adversaries. An inspection is an inspection no matter where in the world it might exist. Some have remained with the usual compliance oriented, career determining events that the army experienced prior to the early 1980's. Others have learned from the US Army and have restructured their programs.

The Soviet military has a more rigid and demanding inspection system controlled by the Minister of Defense. The Main Inspectorate performs three basic

functions: checking on the state of the forces, inspecting their training and verifying their logistic support. Their inspections are conducted annually during combined arms tactical and command and staff exercises(2:28). The inspection team consists of retired senior military officers. Of concern to the Soviet inspectors is the logistical support, manning of weapons, adherence to doctrine, and the status of living conditions of the troops both in garrison and in the field. The commanders at division, regiment and battalion have no input to the inspection. It is looked upon as another distracter during their training exercises(2:28).

The United States Marine Corps continued their rigorous inspection programs until 1987 when the Inspector General of the Marine Corps directed that the entire Marine Corps inspection programs be reviewed from an unbiased vantage point. Seven majors from the Marine Command and Staff College conducted an in depth review of all inspections and were directed by the Inspector General to present their recommendations to the Commandant of the Marine Corps(10:36). Their recommendations resulted in a significant break from the traditional Marine Corps approach to inspections (10:36-7). Their recommendations were:

- 1). Immediate discontinuance of the current Inspector General inspection schedule.
- 2). Assignment of inspection responsibility to major Marine Corps commands.
- 3). Centralization for scheduling and coordination of all Headquarter, USMC inspection agencies under the Marine Corps Inspector General.

On 30 April 1988, the traditional Marine Corps inspections became Marine Corps history. Each major command is now charged with designing and executing their own Command Inspection Program that ensures compliance with directives. Their core program consists of those functional areas that are essential for individual and collective mission capabilities at the unit level. In short, the new Marine Corps program gives the responsibility to monitor, evaluate and maintain the overall combat readiness of subordinate units back to the field commanders.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT MAKES A GOOD PROGRAM

Although it is not the intent of this paper to develop an inspection program, there are many do's and don'ts that make some programs stand out over others. Focus, inspection criteria, command involvement and philosophy, units mission and methodology are all key ingredients that must be factored into an inspection.

The Command Inspection Program begins long before the word inspection is mentioned. The "Commander's Philosophy" is communicated when a commander assumes command. It is usually in writing and the commander established the priorities, objectives, goals and standards for the command. Requiring the chain of command to inspect soldiers daily, the appearance of the post and fixing responsibility for ensuring that daily housekeeping matters are taken care of as a routine matter starts the inspection program. When the daily housekeeping chores are taken care of as a matter of normal business, the Command Inspection Program can be devoted to readiness, the heart and sole of an army. Maintenance,

training and the overall combat readiness of a unit are the critical areas that determine the overall ability or inability of a unit to perform their mission.

Determining Methodology

Regulatory guidance requires that the brigade commander establish an inspection policy within his command. Being the first level of command without a detailed Inspector General, he must establish the level to which his command will inspect, the criteria for all inspections in the brigade and whether inspections will be announced or unannounced. Successful programs are characterized by prudent analysis of each subordinate unit's mission, capabilities and goals. All three areas must be considered in the preinspection, inspection and follow up portions.

Determining which level of command conducts the CIP must be carefully determined based on expertise available, focus of the inspection and overall objectives of the inspection. If we train as we fight, then the brigade commander's CIP should focus on the companies within the brigade and battalion level CIP should focus on platoons. Brigades direct the maneuver of companies and battalions direct the maneuver of platoons. Since mission statements and task organizations originating

at brigades are directed at company level, then it becomes apparent that a brigade commander should inspect the units he directs, the companies.

This approach further supports the Officer Evaluation Reporting System. Within the guidelines of AR 623-105, Officer Evaluation Reporting System, the brigade commander is the Senior Rater for company commanders and the battalion commander is the senior rater for platoon leaders. Inspecting companies during the CIP gives the brigade commander the opportunity to see each company firsthand and to make a personal evaluation based on his own observations, not just data fed through the system to the senior rater.

Mustering Resources

Resources available at brigade level far outnumber the resources available at battalion, both in quantity and quality. The brigade commander has a forward support battalion, a staff of field grade officers, and other like battalions from which to draw expertise. The staff expertise at brigade, by rank alone, is far superior to a battalion. They are all field grade officers and senior NCOs who have served at battalion level in the past. They know the problems and the pitfalls that exist in organizations and have the background to provide assistance where required. Since brigades are

resource providers and allocators, they are in touch with current problems and solutions that are available. Depending on the focus of the inspection and the location of the unit, post support activities that are subordinate to the brigade are available to further the expertise at brigade level. Critical to the success of the program is competent personnel that are knowledgeable in their functional area. Key to the ultimate success of the program is to man the inspection team with recognized, competent people who have the respect of the subordinate units. Bad calls and breaches in integrity will destroy the usefulness of the inspection.

Defining Criteria

Defining the criteria for the inspection is critical if the objectives of the event are to be accomplished. Criteria is defined in Webster's II New Riverside Dictionary as: " a standard or rule by which something can be judged." Establishing a tough, but realistic standards for the CIP allows units to understand what standards they should strive to meet. Criteria must provide a basis for judgment but also provide subordinate units a method by which to organize, administer and evaluate themselves(9:4).

In establishing inspection criteria, caution must be taken to avoid the checklist mentality with "Yes" and "No" answers. Instead of evaluating against the maximum requirement, structured checklists, when required, should set the minimum requirements. This allows subordinate units to add to the minimum as they see fit to meet their mission requirements. Credence must also be given to those areas that are critical to a unit's mission. For example, a M-16A1 rifle is of little significance to a tank crewman yet it is the primary weapon for a dismounted infantry soldier. Common sense has to prevail in determining the inspection criteria. Keeping with the current thinking and Total Quality Management, good management and leadership results in compliance. This is opposed to the past beliefs that compliance is an indication that units does only what the commander checks.

Announced verses Unannounced

The Commander's Training Guidance is the document to disseminate the commander's long range plan and related activities. An announced inspection schedule can be published in this document. The announced verses unannounced scenario requires considerable analysis prior to determining the type inspection appropriate for the unit. Both have there merits and shortfalls.

The announced inspection has the potential of becoming a reason for a unit to stand down for a period of time in preparation for the inspection and neglecting their daily training activities. The standards for the inspection must be adjusted to fit the type inspection. A unit that scrubs, paints, and polishes for a month prior to a CIP will look considerably better than the unit that has just returned from field maneuvers. The announced system affords the commander the opportunity to incorporate a broader scope into the inspection. Standards would be higher and a more rigid schedule of events would occur. A drawback to the announced methodology is that an inordinate amount of time would be spent on paperwork and in preparation for the inspection at the detriment of the soldiers and of lost training time.

In an unannounced inspection, the unit is observed as it routinely operates, not how well it prepares for an inspection. The standard operating procedures are observed and a true determination can be made how well a unit can perform its mission. However, unit trying to second guessing when the inspection will be and breeches in the inspection schedule can cause units to work soldiers unnecessarily in preparation for a possible inspection.

Make it a Training Event

To make a Command Inspection Program a training event, care must be taken to insure that every possible training benefit can be derived from the exercise. In these times of a reduced funding, maximum training benefits must be achieved. The combining of requirements is an excellent way of achieving these results.

Each unit is required to conduct unannounced Operational Readiness Tests (ORT) on subordinate units. Linking the unannounced ORT and the CIP together is one method that has proven successful. During austere times, maximum benefit has to be realized when moving track vehicles to the field with the costs running in excess of \$130 per miles for a M1A1 tank. A consolidated ORT and CIP gives the commander a chance to see many facets of a unit. Additionally, many intangibles vital to the combat readiness of a unit and soldiers that are not measurable by standards or checklists can be observed. Leadership, initiative, innovation and sound tactical sense can be taught but the application of these traits is hard to inspect or evaluate. They are all key ingredients to the overall combat readiness of an organization to perform its combat mission.

Use of Army Standards

Readiness can be evaluated on paper as well as in the field. However, paper readiness lacks the objectivity of observing a unit performing its mission. Standards by which to evaluate a unit's or an individual soldier's proficiency are clearly defined in the units Army Training and Evaluation Plan (ARTEP), the Common Skills Manual and the Soldiers' Manual. Using these standards promotes standardization throughout the command as well as throughout the Army.

Critique and Followup

Following each inspection, a thorough critique between the brigade commander and the company commander has proven beneficial. Not only does the critique serve as an out brief for the inspection, but it is an opportunity for each commander to review their DA Form 67-8-1, Officer Evaluation Support Form. Objectives and accomplishments are reviewed to ensure that the subordinate understands and is in synch with the commander. This also serves to establish what needs to be corrected as well as what assistance is required to fix deficient areas before the follow up portion of the inspection is conducted.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS

Many brigades are conducting the Command Inspection Program with commendable results. Effectiveness of the programs are directly related to the commanders ability to focus the Command Inspection on the unit's ability to perform its combat mission and the associated support required to perform that mission.

Units deriving maximum benefit from the program have several similar characteristics. First, the programs are major training events. Generally unannounced, the programs consist of consolidation of the staff inspections, Operational Readiness Tests and the Command Inspections. This has been effective in combat, combat support and combat service support units. Each inspection has been meaningful and has proven to be worthwhile to the soldiers and to the units. They are not viewed as just another inspection.

An added benefit of the Army's Organizational Program is the professional military education derived from a well planned and executed program. Positive lessons

learned by the junior officers and soldiers have carried many of them throughout their careers. The end result is better soldiers, better units and a better Army.

The Army's Organizational Inspection Program allows commanders the latitude to focus the inspection as they deem necessary. Since no two units are exactly alike in mission, personnel and personality, the program is flexible enough to be tailored to unit needs.

The program is sound in its current form. As more commanders observe the benefits derived from a well organized and executed CIP, more effective use will be made of the program by all commanders.

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